

-GRY WORDS IN THE OED

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Now that the Second Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary is available on a CD-ROM (see review elsewhere in this issue), it is at last possible to find all the headwords, variant forms and phrases ending in -GRY in that august work - and, at the same time, check the diligence of those who previously mined out these words by hand. There are, in fact, only seven words not previously spotted in the OED by **Word Ways** researchers; these are labeled with + below. One of these, UNANGRY, was noted in another dictionary. Five are variants or compounds based on ANGRY or HUNGRY: NANGRY, LAND-HUNGRY, LEATHER-HUNGRY, MAN-HUNGRY, and YERD-HUNGRY. The last one, IGGRY, was cited in the August issue of **Word Ways** in a review of Dickson's Word Treasury.

All the -GRY words in the OED? Inexplicably, the CD-ROM search missed a number of words, labeled with * below: BRAGGRY, MAGRY, MAUGRY, MAWGRY, MESSAGRY, POTTINGRY, PUGGRY, PUGRY, SCAVENGRY and YMAGRY. The SCAVENGRY omission is actually Murray's fault, for he did not include this citation-sanctioned spelling as a variant of SCAVENGERY. The program can be asked to find -GRY words appearing only in citations, but this was not done as it would have turned up proper names and other irrelevancies as far as the OED is concerned.

The CD-ROM search also identified the spurious word NURSLINGRY, inferred from the OED entry "Nurce, -ling, -ry". Although this is not a serious error, it does illustrate that there is no substitute for a trained eye and brain when interpreting computer printout.

For a more extensive discussion of the -GRY problem, the reader is referred to George H. Scheetz's article "In Goodly Gree: With Goodwill" in the November 1989 **Word Ways**, and Murray Pearce's "Who's Flaithbhertach MacLoingry?" and Harry Partridge's "Gypsy Hobby Gry" in the February 1990 issue.

In the list below, dates are given for citations actually using the indicated spelling.

AGGRY (1819-76)

ANGRY (1375+), HANGRY (c1386), MAD-ANGRY (1632), NANGRY+ (1681),
UNANGRY+ (1876)

BEGRY (no citation) see beggary

BRAGGRY* (1576) see braggery

CONYNGRY (1521) see conyger [a rabbit-warren]

GRY (1594-1813)

HIGRY PIGRY (1773)

HUNGRY (1382+), AHUNGRY (no citation), ANHUNGRY (1607-81),
HONGRY (1526), LAND-HUNGRY+ (1889), LEATHER-HUNGRY+ (1804),
MAD-HUNGRY (no citation), MAN-HUNGRY+ (1951), YERD-HUNGRY+
(1825)

IGGRY+ (1925)

MAGRY* (15..), MAUGRY* (1548), MAWGRY* (1483) see maugre [ill-
will; in spite of]

MEAGRY (1603)

MENANGRY (no citation) see menagerie

MESSAGRY* (1658) see messagery

PODAGRY (1657)

POTTINGRY* (1500/20) see pottingary [apothecary]

PUGRY* (no citation), PUGGRY* (1893, 'puggries') see puggree
[turban; scarf on sun-helmet]

SCAVENGRY* (1715, quotation only) see scavengery

SKUGRY (1568) see scuggery [secrecy]

YMAGRY* (c1400) see imagery

THE CONCISE DICTIONARY OF PROVERBS

*This is the new edition of a 316-page book edited by John Simpson and Jennifer Speakes (Oxford University Press, 1992; \$22.95), containing more than one thousand proverbs with detailed citations showing their evolution over the centuries. One finds such modern examples as **garbage in, garbage out** or **there's no such thing as a free lunch**, together with hoary obscurities like **better a dinner of herbs than a stalled ox where hate is**. Browsing, one can uncover such delights as **never choose your women or your linen by candlelight**. Peter Newby has used this work as the source for a logological game: substituting WORD or WORD WAYS for various nouns in proverbs to form new proverbs with droll or unexpected meanings.*